№ 20

The TERMS of PEACE and RECONCILIATION Betwixt all Divided Parties.

A

SERMON

PREACH'D at the

ASSIZES

HELD FOR THE

COUNTY of *BUCKINGHAM*,

AT THE

TOWN of *WICOMB*,

JULY the 1. 1684.

By *LUKE BEAULIEU*.

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A PREFACE TO THE READER.

'Twas the desire of Sir Denys Hampson, *High Sheriff of the County of* Buckingham, *that I should Preach and Print the ensuing Sermon, wherein I very plainly acquainted the Honourable Audience that heard it, with my thoughts of a Sacred Text, and a Christian Duty.*

Likely that worthy Gentleman judg'd it might be somewhat useful to promote in others that affectionate Loyalty, wherein he is so Eminent and so Exemplary: And I design it should; being fully convinc'd, that an humble Obedience, and a hearty Love to the King, is under our duty to God, the best and strongest Link to joyn us together in that Peace I here recommend.

Recommend it indeed I may, Curats of Souls can do no more, the honour of the Success is due to the Divine Grace, and to the Care and Vigilance of Civil Magistrates. They are the true and the most persuasive Preachers of the Publick

Peace: for their Words have a ſtrong efficacy by that Power and Intereſt which they have in the World: And now, as the Caſe lies, People want more to be Govern'd than to be Inſtructed, for what concerns their faithfulneſs and ſubmiſſion to their Rulers.

More hath been ſaid for Loyalty within theſe laſt Hundred Years, by the Clergy of this Church, than can be found in all former Ages united together. The Jeſuites and the Sectaries made it neceſſary, by all ſorts of Arguments and Reaſons, to aſſert and preſs that Duty, which Natural and Chriſtian Religion had fully taught our Fore-fathers. Now the matter is Exhauſted, and where Demonſtration and Exhortations can't prevail, Authority muſt work; They that will not be perſuaded to be peaceable and good Subjects, muſt be Chaſtis'd, and reſtrained by Laws and Magiſtrates.

If they that are truſted with the adminiſtration of Publick Juſtice, have courage and honeſty enough to be Impartial, we ſee, thanks be to God, that they can better work on turbulent Spirits, then the beſt of Books or Sermons which are neither heard nor heeded by them that love and abett Contentions. True Religion alone makes them Obedient and Peaceable, that are the true Sons of the Church: Others muſt be dealt with by Fear and Government. Such Magiſtrates as have ſo ſtout and ſtrong a Zeal, for their Prince and Country, as to encourage Loyalty, and to proceed as far as the Law goeth, againſt ungovernable and ſeditious Spirits, will make more Proſelytes than all our Diſcourſes and Perſuaſions can do. So that I ſay, under the Divine Providence, the ſucceſs of all endeavours for Peace, is due to them that are in places of Authority, and earneſtly uſe their power for reducing all Men to Peace and Obedience.

Not that I would make Clergymen give over exhorting the People to live in Peace and Chriſtian Subjection; 'tis their

their indiſpenſable Duty, and part of their Office, as Saint Paul *appointed.* Tit. 3. 1. Put them in mind to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magiſtrates, to be ready to every good Work, to ſpeak evil of no Man, to be no brawlers but gentle, ſhewing all meekneſs unto all men. *Neither do I count their labour in this to be vain, and to no purpoſe. Though ſcoffers and prophane and fooliſh men deride Religion, yet it will ever have a very great influence upon the Affairs of this World. There is, by our very Nature, a Senſe of it impreſt upon the minds of men; and they are often led even to deſperate attempts, by the meer ſhew, or the pretence of it.*

So we found it by woful experience, in the late Rebellion: And ſince, the laſt Critical times made it too manifeſt, that Clamours about Religion could ſoon enflame the Multitude. By them, our Schiſmatical Guides had diſpos'd their party ready, once more to fight out the Lords Battels: and the major part of the People might have been hurried on to very unchriſtian and miſchievous Enterprizes, had our Clergy either incited them, or but let them alone, without reſtraining them with the ſenſe of the fear of God, and other proper Arguments.

'Tis true, the ſame Clergy were more earneſt in preaching againſt Popery, after the ſudden affrightment which the news of a Popiſh Plot *brought upon the Nation: But that was no derogation to their Peaceableneſs, and their moſt faithful Allegiance, and it became them ſo to do, perſuaded as they are, that dangerous Innovations and Errors have been brought by the Church of* Rome *in the Chriſtian Doctrine and Worſhip. Knowing withal, that the Biſhop of that Church claims a Juriſdiction over all Kings and all Chriſtians, and hath condemn'd them as Rebels that will not ſubmit to his Yoke. This makes it their duty, at ſome times to inſtruct their Charge, in the principal points of the*

Controverſie, and to alledg their reaſons why the Communion of our Church is much to be preferʼd to that of Rome: *And the diſcovery of a Popiſh deſign for our Ruine, atteſted, as it was, by the higheſt Authority of this Realm, made it ſeaſonable and very requiſit no be more earneſt at that time, againſt* Roman *Errors and Encroachments.*

We know that all the Diſſenters, who make us Popiſhly affected, would blaſt our Credit with the People: And then the duties of Loyal and quiet ſubjection, and of aſſerting the juſt Deſcent of the Crown, in that order which God and Nature, and our Fundamental Laws have preſcribed, theſe would never have been heeded nor received from us, had we not then declarʼd our real averſion to Papal Superſtitions and Uſurpations.

The ſame deſires of Peace and of Obedience to the King and the Laws under which we live, engage us equally againſt Papiſts and Diſſenters. ʼTis not their private Opinions, however abſurd in themſelves, that are to be chiefly feared: but the tendency of their Principles, and endeavours to alter the frame of our Government, and to bring our Sovereign under Presbyterian Synods, or Pontifical Chairs. Our conſtant Loyalty and peaceable diſpoſition oblige us to oppoſe either of them moſt earneſtly, who moſt preſſeth upon the State, and is moſt formidable and dangerous for the preſent.

Our truly Primitive and Chriſtian Religion doth all poſſible ways oblige and engage us, to be true, affectionate and ſubject, to thoſe great Officers whom God hath appointed to be his Vicegerents, to preſerve the peace of the World; we have in our publick Prayers frequent Mementoes and Endearments of this Duty, in our moſt ſolemn and devout Addreſſes to the Throne of Grace: And a true Member of this Church, can never be an ill Subject. Therefore, as duty and intereſt oblige Miniſters of Religion, to aſſert and

defend

defend the Magiſtrates Power: So, without doubt, the ſame reaſons oblige the Magiſtrates to uphold and maintain a Religion, which beſides its guidance to Life everlaſting, is ſo proper and ſerviceable to preſerve the peace of the World, and to make Men obedient and happy, whilſt they remain in it.

I know that Chriſtian Religion was at firſt eſtabliſht and continued without the help of Civil Magiſtrates. When Miracles were wrought for its Confirmation, and Perſecutions againſt it deter'd the looſer ſort from its profeſſion, then very few came in, but ſuch as were true Believers, and ſuch as would ſubmit themſelves to the Diſcipline of the Church. But ſince Chriſtianity became the Religion of the Empire, and there were outward inducements to make even bad Men to become Profeſſors, ſtill to truſt even pretenders to vent what Opinions they pleaſe, under notion of Preaching the Goſpel: Now that we have ſo many Baptized Heathen, who aim only at obtaining as much of this World, right or wrong, as ever they can, ſtill to let them cloak their deſigns under the name of Chriſtian Religion, is of dangerous conſequence.

The rewards of Eternity will ever ſtrongly affect humane minds, and muſt not be ſuffer'd to be plaid with, to ſerve ſecular ends. When a crafty and factious Demagogue ſhall terribly preach Damnation, or in a milder tone make Saints of his party; he to be ſure, will lead them where he will, and make them fight with zeal, for what he calls Goſpel, and Godlineſs. We have more than once in this Age had experience of this, to ſome purpoſe. So that beſides the Duty of Princes, who under God govern the World, it is highly their Intereſt to tolerate no Religion but ſuch as teacheth and diſpoſeth their Subjects to be Peaceable and Obedient, and to ſubmit themſelves, according to the Example and abſolute Precepts of our Saviour and his Apoſtles.

It

It might as well be askt, What need Laws and ſevere Inflictions to maintain Juſtice and Vertue, as what need they, to preſerve Religion? A ſenſe of both, 'tis true, is impreſt on the Mind, and by their own excellency they recommend themſelves: But Humane Nature is deprav'd, there are evil paſſions and affections which will diſpoſe ſome men to call Juſtice and Religion what ever they would have, though deſtructive and contrary to both. So that every man in theſe things, muſt not be his own Judg. After having ſeen our Royal Martyr taken and deſtroyed in this ſnare; after having our ſelves lately eſcapt it narrowly, I can find no reaſon, why any Friend to what is Eſtabliſht, ſhould ſtill countenance Diſſenters, and endeavour to ſhelter them from being reduc'd to Obedience: Except he would have a Back-door for a retreat in caſe of Diſcontent: And find a party ready-made wherein he may be formidable, if he happens to be anger'd.

When the Execution of our mildeſt Laws againſt Separatiſts, would eaſily bring them into a Church againſt which they have but a few frivolous exceptions, and into which they can come of themſelves upon deſign or occaſion; when in that Church they would be taught to love their Governours, and be peaceable and good Subjects, and their ſeparation from it is ſeen to be ſo dangerous, and of ſo ill a conſequence, as ſad experience hath taught us: I cannot think, that any man who truly loves the King, and would have us quiet and united under his gracious Government, would either help to perpetuate our Diviſions, or refuſe to do his utmoſt to bring us all to comply with the Laws.

It is for our good in this World, and if Chriſtianity be true, it is infinitly our concern in the next, that we ſhould live in Peace and Subjection, under our Magiſtrates: Conſequently whatever names they take, they that act or ſpeak againſt this, are ſo far enemies to mans Duty and Happineſs.

neſs. It can be neither a good, nor a tender Conſcience, nor any thing of Religion that makes men Contentious, and alienates their minds from that affectionate ſubmiſſion and reſpect, which God hath commanded to be paid to Princes.

I would have this noted, to vindicate our Bleſſed Lords humble and peaceable Inſtitution; for the bottom of moſt of our Diſputes, and of all our oppoſitions and murmurings againſt our Governours, is really a faction and a wordly deſign. There's nothing of Chriſtianity, nothing but what is againſt it, in all the Noiſes and Clamours, the Lyes and the Libels, and all the buſtle and proceedings of thoſe ſeeming Zealots, who lately affrighted and almoſt deſtroyed us. Plainly, all this tends in no wiſe to the deſign of Chriſtian Religion, which is to make men here like the God of Goodneſs, and to bring them to live with him for ever.

But all men have not Faith. There are many who will be called Chriſtians, who believe not that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall Judg the World in Righteouſneſs, and ſhall ſentence all men to Joys or Sorrows eternal, according as they here obſerv'd or diſobey'd his Laws. Such incredulous men make uſe of Religion to compaſs their worldly deſigns: and are ſeldom ſo ingenuous, as to declare that they intend only to be great and rich in this World, and that they regard not what our Saviour hath revealed of the retributions of the Day of Judgment. So the Goſpel comes to be charg'd with the miſcarriage of ſuch as believe none of it, but are rather its greateſt Enemies.

Chriſtianity diſpoſeth men for Peace, makes them humble and lowly, meek and obedient to their Superiors; it is Irreligion and corrupt Nature makes them otherwiſe. He that ſuffers as a turbulent or undutiful Subject, as an evil-doer or a buſie-body in other mens Matters, ſuffers rather as an Unbeliever, than as a Diſciple of Jeſus.

I do believe that the diſcouragements and the ſufferings which Religion and good Men that love it, muſt ſtruggle with here in this World, conduce to the good of the Church, and to the glory of God. That oppoſition they meet with, who fear God and honour the King, from Hypocrites and turbulent Spirits, gives them an occaſion to exerciſe many Chriſtian graces, ſhews their ſincerity, and makes them more zealous for their duty. But yet fain would we ſee Jeruſalem *in Proſperity, all our life long! a good and pleaſant thing it is, Brethren to dwell together in Unity! Truth and Peace are ſecured and highly promoted, by being countenanc'd and protected by Magiſtrates: So that, as we wiſh and endeavour to have their Power reverenc'd and ſubmitted to: we alſo wiſh and pray, and count it a mighty Bleſſing, to have it us'd for our defence, whilſt we do our Duty, and for the advancement of true Religion and Virtue.*

And may they never want the hearty Prayers and Affections of good Men, who under God and our gracious Sovereign, are uſeful and inſtrumental, by the execution of our wholeſome Laws, to keep us in that happy quietneſs we now enjoy: That we may live and die, and afterwards reſt in Peace for ever.

A SERMON

On Rom. xii. 18.

If it be poſſible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all Men.

NO wonder if by Peace the *Hebrews* underſtood all ſorts of Bleſſings, and by wiſhing Peace one to another, meant all Proſperity and Happineſs: For the very notion which Men have of it, includes a freedom from Moleſtation, and a ſatisfaction and acquieſcence of deſires; that no Aſſault or Vexation ſhould come upon us from abroad, and that Content ſhould dwell within.

Accordingly we find that all Men ſeek and deſire Peace, even the moſt turbulent and reſtleſs earneſtly covet it; thoſe Wars and Contentions, and that mighty Buſtle that is in the World, is all to obtain Peace.

But men generally are in a great miſtake about this, they would have every thing comply with their own will; if they might command all the World, then

they would proclaim Peace to it, and by receiving a tribute of Obedience, they would releaſe others from the trouble of Contention. Their great labour for the moſt part, is to carry it in every thing, to have their Humour pleaſed, and to bring under ſubjection whatever croſſeth their deſigns.

As to the thing it ſelf, the worth and deſireableneſs of Peace all Men are agreed, only as to the methods and ways how to obtain it, moſt of them are wrong. They all know it deſerves their utmoſt endeavours; but how 'tis to be had, and wherein it conſiſts, few only underſtand.

Of this then, I ſhall aſſay to give ſome account, and to explain the Text, by anſwering firſt ſome Queſtions about the Senſe of it. And then making Inferences, for our better underſtanding and obſerving of the Duty, *If it be poſſible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all Men.*

To apprehend rightly the deſign of this Exhortation, theſe three things may be enquired into. 1. What peace it is this World is capable of? 2. What it is thus to live peaceably with all Men? And laſtly, How far it lies in every one ſo to do?

For the firſt, The meaning of this Apoſtolick Precept, is not that in all things there ſhould be the cloſeſt union, and the moſt tender endearments betwixt our ſelves and the reſt of Mankind. We muſt not aim at this, we ſhould loſe our labour, the World is not capable of ſuch a Peace.

Our Saviour ſaid, *That his Doctrine would occaſion great Diviſions, and that he came to ſend a Sword.* Meeting with the depravations of Humane Nature, and oppoſing of them, even the Goſpel of Peace cauſeth many Contentions, and what ſhould unite Men together, makes

makes them fall out and become Enemies. As long as there are diſorders in Humane Affections, men muſt fall ſhort of peace.

Our peace here below, is rather a diſpoſition and a tendency towards it, than its full enjoyment: And it conſiſteth properly, in the ſubmiſſion of our ſelves to God, and a ſerious care to comply with our Duty. The foundation of our peace is Self-denial; the being humble and ſubject, as becomes ſuch dependent and weak Creatures to be. 'Tis not to command all, and have others reſign themſelves to us; peace never was, never can be obtain'd this way, by any mortal Man, except he could become omnipotent. For if he owes his being and his preſervation to a Power above him, if he hath a Lord in Heaven, then his ſubmiſſion and obedience are the conditions of his peace, with God, with himſelf, and with other Men.

So peace with God, is the reſult of a good Conſcience, when a Man reflects upon his hearty deſires and endeavours to pleaſe him, and to approve himſelf to the Searcher of Hearts, by a ſincere obſervance of his holy Laws. Peace with a man's ſelf, includes mortified Affections kept within due bounds; the taking up the Yoke of Chriſt, and the Conſciouſneſs of a good and upright intention. And peace with our Neighbours, depends upon the juſtice and charity of our Entercourſe with them; to love them as our ſelves, and do by them as we would be done by; to give to every Man his due, and what we can, wiſh and promote his happineſs and well-being. Any ſwerving, or prevarication from theſe Rules preſcribed by God, diſturbs or breaks our peace; it is grounded upon a careful attendance upon our Duty: And it is always imperfect, becauſe our performance of it is always defective.

That peace of which this World is capable, or a good Man whilſt he remains in it, is not ſit to above others, and have things at with, without trouble or moleſtation; the aiming at this, is the cauſe of all Wars and Diſorders here below. Peace here conſiſts in obedience to God, in ſeeking and enſuing after it, by eſchewing evil and doing good, as we are commanded: As men are more or leſs zealous and intent upon this, ſo they have more or leſs of that threefold peace I mention'd,

As for the perfection of Peace, *it is only for Juſt men made perfect*; 'tis the felicity and proper enjoyment of the heavenly *Jeruſalem.* Here as much of peace as comes to our ſhare, conſiſts in aſpiring and endeavouring after it; in following thoſe ways of Vertue and Holineſs, which lead to Heaven; and in bearing, by true goodneſs, the Image of the God of Peace, in whom alone we can obtain perfect reſt and ſatisfaction. The true peace of which this World is capable, is the ſubmitting our ſelves to the Will of God, and making it the Rule of ours.

And this will help us to anſwer the ſecond Enquiry, What it is to live peaceably with all Men? That it is not to awe the World into a ſubjection to us, and make them ſay as we ſay: As ſome Conquerors, who could make the very Oracles give ſuch Reſponſes as they pleaſed. The meaſures of Publick Peace muſt not, cannot be our own will, nor our own deſires.

Neither alſo is peace to be obtain'd by complying with every Man. To make our ſelves all things to all, without reſtriction, would rather engage us into the Quarrels of every one that diſſents from others, than beget Concord and Union. What a miſerable Changeling or Diſſembler muſt he be, that would take

part

part with all he meets, in their ſeveral Deſigns and Opinions, which are ſo oppoſite and contrary to each other! to be of one mind in one place, of another in the next Company! This would mightily multiply the Follies and Inconſtancies of Men, without preventing their Conteſts, or their Diviſions.

Saint *Paul* did not deſign theſe Chriſtian Proſelytes whom he exhorts to live in peace with all men, ſhould with the *Gentiles* Sacrifice to the Idols, or with the *Jews* be Circumciſed, or any way comply with ſinful Practices, to be at Unity with the reſt of Mankind. He no doubt intended, they ſhould without changing, remain ſtedfaſt in the Chriſtian Doctrine, and own the Truth as it is in Jeſus, without denying or diſſembling any part of it. We may ſay that his meaning was, 1. That they ſhould be careful to obſerve thoſe laws of Juſtice and Charity, which regulate the Entercourſe and Societies of Mankind. And, 2. That where they were free, they ſhould ſo condeſcend and comply with each other, as to endeavour to prevent Fewds and Contentions.

Firſt, I ſay, to live peaceably with all men, includes the careful obſervance of thoſe Laws which ſecure the juſt rights of every man, and provide a ſupply for their Neceſſities. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another*; diſcharge all Obligations with Care and Conſcience. It is the violation of Juſtice, the not giving to others what is theirs, that begets Clamours and Conteſts, and all the conſequent Miſchiefs. *Render to all their dues, Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Cuſtome to whom Cuſtome, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour.* This is a good foundation for a ſolid peace, for a man thus diligently to acquit himſelf with others; to deprive them of nothing to which they have a good Title.

Title. When they have no ground to challenge any thing from you, it will go a great way to ſecure you from their Moleſtations.

And if with this, you have a due regard to the duties of Charity, to do men Kindneſſes, and to relieve their Wants, as far as lies in your power. By your Prayers, your good Advice, your Credit in the World, or your bountiful Alms, to promote here their well-being, and their Eternal Happineſs; then you are come up to thoſe terms on which depends the Amity, and fair Correſpondence of Men; making thus the dictates of Reaſon and Religion the meaſure of your Entercourſe with others, you may be ſaid to live peaceably with all Men.

Only add this further, which I ſaid might be included in this Apoſtolick Precept, that where Men are free and left to themſelves, they ſhould condeſcend and comply.

Very manny Quarrels proceed from inconſiderable Trifles, things of no moment, but as they are much ſtood upon by perverſe and unreaſonable Paſſions, the fooliſhneſs of a proud, an angry, or a ſtubborn Spirit; a little Prudence, or Humility, or Charity would prevent ſuch Diſputes: and the ſpirit and temper of true Chriſtian Religion, would ſoon compoſe and make an end of them.

If where Men are not tied by Laws and Duties, they would be willing to recede from their Right; not always to conſult the utmoſt of what is lawful, but alſo what is expedient; every man to pleaſe his Neighbour for good to Edification; go as far with others as they can without Sin; condeſend to their innocent Weakneſſes and Humours: *And ſhew forth, out of a good Converſation their works with meekneſs of Wiſdom*; as St. *James* ſpeaks,

ſpeaks, *That Wiſdom which is from above, and is pure and peaceable, gentle, eaſie to be entreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits.* This, no doubt, would prevent, or at leaſt terminate many of our Wranglings and Contentions. And he that will live peaceably, muſt alſo reſolve upon this, where it will interfer with no other Duty, to yield for Peace ſake, what others cannot claim as due: and to forgive and forbear as well as to do Juſtice.

The doing of this, is properly the living peaceably with all Men. He that ſeriouſly reſolves, and ſincerely endeavours, to obſerve what God and Nature require in order to Mutual Quietneſs, hath done his part. Of his ſide he is ready to embrace others on thoſe terms to which he is tied by Duty; to go as far to meet with them, as lawfully he may; he entertains no dividing Principles; he is at peace with all the World, as far as in him lies. A man can do no more, and this is the Duty of the Text. Not actually to have peace with every man, though never ſo unreaſonable or unjuſt, that's impoſſible: But to be of this peaceable diſpoſition; to own and diſcharge thoſe Obligations which lie upon all Men, in order to Mutual Agreement.

And this makes the reſolution of the laſt Enquiry very plain and eaſie: How far it lies in a Chriſtian to live peaceably with all Men?

He cannot force them to what he would, nor to what they ſhould; He may not part with God's Right, nor any mans Right to comply with them: He can only do his Duty, and offer them peace upon the Terms of his obedience to the Laws of God, and the lawful Commands of his Superiors.

For

For thoſe Laws muſt not be infring'd to pleaſe Men. I may abridg my ſelf of my Liberty, and even put up ſome Wrongs, and where I alone am concern'd, I ought to do ſo, in many Caſes: But where I am tied by a juſt Authority, I muſt not break the bonds of my Subjection to pleaſe my Fellow Subjects; I may not any ways diſobey God to buy peace with Men.

Where St. *Paul* ſaith, *If it be poſſible, live peaceably with all Men*; he means Morally poſſible. *Poſſumus quod jure poſſumus.* Where we may without tranſgreſſing our Duty, without prejudice to our Obligations to God and man, there 'tis in our power, and we muſt do what we can to have Peace.

Indeed that may not procure it. When we have done our beſt, aud all that lawfully we may, ſtill Diviſions and Quarrels may remain. The word Peace is a Relative, and implies a Mutual Correſpondency; that there are fixt, and known, and ſtanding Terms in which Men of all Sides ſhould agree. So that where ſo many are concern'd, one alone can no more make Peace and Union, than one ſingle Note of Muſick can make an Harmony.

But 'tis not our fault, if others will not comply with thoſe Laws of Mutual Agreement, preſcribed by Reaſon and Religion. Actual Peace is a Bleſſing, and a great Felicity, but not a Duty; 'tis too Divine an enjoyment for this ſtate of Imperfection: It is reſerv'd to Crown our thirſt and purſuits after it. Here our Obligation is only to peaceableneſs; to be juſt and ready to do good; to induce others what we can to joyn with us in the Methods and the Meaſures of Peace; to oppoſe and mortifie thoſe Inclinations in us, which are Selfiſh and Partial, and provoking to others. Thus to rule our Converſation, and to diſpoſe

ſpoſe our Hearts, is the Duty of the Text. And is as much as lies in a Chriſtian to do, that he may live peaceably with all men.

Now theſe three Queries ſatisfied, and the Text thus far explained, we may ground upon what hath been ſaid, theſe three Propoſitions, to be briefly Stated and Diſcours'd upon, for the further preſſing of this Exhortation; to do as much as poſſibly we can, to live peaceably with all Men. 1. That Publick Laws are the true Terms of peace amongſt Men. 2. That they are the peaceable Men who Maintain and Obey thoſe Laws. And, 3. That if the Laws command what is ſinful, there a good man muſt ſuffer meekly, and ſtill preſerve Peace.

1. That Publick Laws are the Terms of peace amongſt Men. The Laws of Nature and of Nations amongſt Mankind in general: and the Laws of each Kingdom amongſt the Subjects of it. And to this laſt I reſtrain my Diſcourſe.

Were there not publick ſtandards for Weights and Meaſures, the entercourſe of Trading would be Impracticable, and Extortions not to be prevented: And if the variable and inconſtant Wills of Men were not reſtrain'd and limited, Humane Society would of neceſſity be diſſolv'd, and all Order baniſhed out of the World.

God Almighty himſelf in the Government of the Univerſe, appointed Laws according to which Nature moves. That there might be in that infinite variety of Creatures and Changes here below, ſuch Rules and Uniformities, as that he ſhould not need do things by a particular Will; except in the caſe of Miracles: But leave the Material World under the guidance of

his own wiſe Conſtitutions, to go in ways Determinate and Conſtant, without uncertainty and without Confuſion.

So beſides his own Appointment, we have alſo his own Example, that Laws and Preſcriptions are the beſt means of Peace. And experience confirms the ſame, that if Men were not determin'd in their principal Concerns and Actions, their Paſſions and Apprehenſions being ſo uncertain, and oftentimes ſo oppoſite, they would be in a worſe ſtate than the Brutes. Some muſt chuſe for others and confine their Freedom, otherwiſe Men would come upon the Stage of the World, like the off-ſpring of the Dragons Teeth, only to Fight and Deſtroy one another.

I may not (it ſeems) take, nor do what I would, nor have mine own will; and I would not yield to my Neighbour in all things. Each of us would command, and hath the ſame claims and pretentions. Here then commenceth a Quarrel never to be decided, except a third Perſon, with power doth enterpoſe, and Judg, and determine betwixt us. This is the uſe of Laws and Magiſtrates. Single Perſons may be brought to agree in their ſubmiſſion to Authority, who for ever would be at odds among themſelves, were they left to their liberty.

And ſo, to make an Agreement, 'tis not to give every man his own Humour; That's the very ground of all Diſſention: But to make them all yield to a Common Maſter, who ſhall be Umpire betwixt them. God Almighty therefore made but one Man at firſt, that he might be Sovereign over all his Poſterity, as long as he lived; that from him the Elder of each Tribe, might be a Prince over all his Kindred: and that no two Men might ever be found in the World, Free, and

equal

equal Competitors, without a Superior to decide betwixt them. Government is not the product of Experience, and an after-invention of Mans Wit, upon a Pact and Covenant: but it is the expreſs and primary Inſtitution of God, by whom Mankind were bound to Obedience, by their very coming into the World.

Indeed, if there were no Laws, there would be no Tranſgreſſion properly ſo called: but then, neither would there be any peace. The worſt, the ſtrongeſt, the moſt violent, would ſoon Tyrannize, for men left to themſelves will no more be juſt, than be of one mind. And the Diſpute is not really, whether or no there muſt be Laws, but who ſhall make them? Moſt men will claim that priviledg; and that leads back to Confuſion, as much as having none at all.

So that I ſay, what is ſtated and already in force, muſt determine our Actions, and receive our Obedience: except we would bring our Communities to the ſtate of the firſt Matter, to be a Caos without form.

That the ſtanding Laws under which we live, are the Principle and the Meaſure of our peace; that in them we may meet and reſt, when in our own Notions and Inclinations we cannot, we have (bleſſed be God) beſides other Reaſons, a fair Inſtance of it in the happy Change in the ſtate of things, amongſt us, ſince Laws have reſum'd their Vigour, and been more carefully put in Execution. Thoſe endleſs Fears, and Jealouſies, and Complaints, and endeavours for a Change, which ſo much diſturbed the Nation, are in great meaſure quell'd: And men are return'd more calmly to mind their own Buſineſs, and, I hope, to ſerve God better, ſince Obedience to Government hath been more ſtrictly Exacted.

This late Experiment, confirms ſtrongly what I Plead for, and Demonſtrates clearly, that it is not by indulging to Peoples Humours, by Tolerations, and leaving the Bridle looſe upon their Necks, that they are to be united. If thouſands of Soldiers were to be brought to the ſame place, and to joyn in the ſame Deſign, they are not to be Diſbanded. They would ſoon be diſpers'd, and go ſtragling about, were they left to their liberty: but if they are under Command, they are united in their Ways and Works, who never would be ſo, in their Choice, or their Opinions.

We ſee that where there are fewer things determined by Law, and Men enjoy but the empty name of Republican Liberty, there is generally a ſtanding armed Force to awe them into Subjection and Quietneſs. And we cannot but remember, that they that Buz'd it here, into Peoples Ears that they were Free-born, when they were got into Power, did keep it with the terror of the Sword, and allowed leave to none any ways to diſſent from them; well knowing, that had the People indeed been left to their Freedom, their own dominion and booty would ſoon have been ſnatch'd out of their hands.

Men may Confederate to oppoſe Government, for that in its Diſſolution they hope for a Prey, and to Scramble for ſome ſhare of it: But they muſt be forc'd together into Peace and Order; they never of themſelves conſpire into that. And if the preſent Laws were but Obeyed quietly, till others could be made by general Conſent, and all were Agreed: they would be as Firm and Unmoveable, as the Foundations of the Earth.

If we would have peace, it muſt not be by living without Control, and having every one his Will: but

but by ſubmitting that Will to Authority, and yielding to the Wiſdom and Decrees of publick Conſtitutions. 'Tis not in the Enlarging of Peoples freedom, but in the Abridgment of it, in which conſiſts the nature and eſſence of Peace. The Terms of it are Laws; Humane Laws for our Entercourſe one with another, and many of our outward Actions: And where we are free from theſe, the Laws of Chriſtian Prudence and Charity. Bound we are in every thing; Bound even to make a right uſe of our Liberty: And 'tis our Obedience either to God or man, that can alone keep us in Peace.

This brings us to the Second thing I laid down as a Conſequent, of what was ſaid for the Explaining of the Text. That they are the true peaceable Men, who Maintain and Obey the Laws.

'Tis not a demure Countenance, nor a grave and formal Deportment, nor yet ſpeaking ſoftly, nor pretending friendlineſs to the World, that makes a man a Peace-maker. 'Tis not the aſſuming fine Titles, nor the charging others with having Arbitrary Deſigns. Theſe things look plauſible, and may beguile ſome: but they are no eſtabliſhment for Peace. They rather unhinge what is Eſtabliſh'd; they leave every petulent Man to his own diſtinct Will, and his own diſtinct Intereſt: And that's the ſpring of Wars and Confuſions. A man by Nature may be unactive, and ſeem very quiet; yet if he holds or abets Dividing Principles, if he leſſens the Reverence of the Authority of Laws, he doth weaken the bonds of our Common Union, and he really diſturbs the Publick Peace.

If we ſhould ſee Officers of Juſtice purſue a Criminal, break up Doors, and ranſack Houſes, whilſt the guilty Wretch lurks ſilent and without motion;

if

if when he is taken, and they hale him before a Magiſtrate, we ſhould hear him declare how he deſires to be quiet, if they would but let him alone; charge them with being Rude and Violent, and with diſturbing Perſons that meddle not with them: This might be thought ſpecious enough, and the Malefactor outwardly would appear more liker a Man of peace, than thoſe that ſeize and arreſt him. Yet all this while 'tis moſt certain, that they are the Preſervers of the common Tranquillity, and he the Diſturber of it, notwithſtanding his ſoft Language. So that I ſay, 'Tis not the outward ſhew, nor the Complaints of ſuch as break the Laws: but the Diſpoſitions and the Principles of the Mind, that make good Men to be truly peaceable.

If a Chriſtian hath enough of Humility, and of Gods fear upon his Heart, to make him deny his own conceits and his own deſires to ſubmit to Authority, and ſquare himſelf, not by his own Humour, but by that Rule which is preſcribed to all, then he hath in him the true principles of Peace: And by his Obedience, he joyns with his fellow Subjects in the ſame Laws and Orders, when perhaps, by his own Will and private Judgment, he might be at unity and peace with no Man.

And this gives us the Character, as of a peaceable, ſo of a moderate Man, truly ſo called. That it is not he that halts betwixt two, and pretends friendſhip to the Law, and to the Tranſgreſſors of it, and would not oppoſe nor diſoblige any man, in vindication of his Superiors, nor endanger himſelf to aſſert the Juſtice of their Cauſe, when it is like to be oppreſt. He that goeth half way with the Government, to ſhew he is not ſo ſtubborn as ſome, and then ſtops and goeth

eth no further, to ſhew he is not ſo rigid and high-flown as others: He that complies ſo far with his Rule, as to hold as fair correſpondence with the Conforming Side; and ſo far complies with thoſe that Diſſent, as to have their Friendſhip alſo; ſuch a one is by ſome eſteem'd a quiet and moderate Man, who would be in neither Extreme.

But I ſay, it appears clearly, that Moderation conſiſts rather in Submitting our ſelves to thoſe whom God hath placed over us. *For the Lords ſake*, and *for Conſcience ſake*, as the Scripture commands, to obey every Ordinance of Man: And in all things that are not againſt God, to yield meekly to their Determinations.

There is naturally ſo much of Pride in every Man, that he would be glad to be uppermoſt. And who would not rather have his own Will, if he might without Sin, than be over-rul'd by a Superior Command? I know not how 'tis with others, but for my part, I ſhould count it a fine thing to depend upon no Body, to do what I liſt my ſelf: And amongſt all the Rules and Preſcriptions of Government, to pick and chuſe what I like beſt.

But certainly there is more of Self-denyal and Moderation, to act contrary perhaps to my own Wiſdom and Deſires, in yielding Reverence and Obedience to Laws and Magiſtrates, and reſtraining my own Inclinations to chuſe the Injunctions of my Governors for the rule of my Actions.

But that it ſhould be call'd Moderation, for a Subject to Obey but by halves, and to do his Duty very untowardly; to make it a matter of Commendation that a man hath no great regard to the Laws, nor no great affection to his Prince: To ſay that a Child is moderate

moderate in his concerns for his Parents, and in doing what they bid him, this is an odd way of ſpeaking. That a man tranſported with paſſion when any ways injur'd; fierce and troubleſome before Humane Tribunals, for a few Pence of his: That ſuch a one ſhould be call'd Moderate, becauſe he cares not whether the Government ſinks or ſwims, and he will not engage himſelf to vindicate and defend it; I ſay, this is an odd way of ſpeaking, and begets in the Minds of men a ſtrange notion of a Chriſtian Vertue.

It is in their private concerns, in bearing and forbearing out of Charity to others, in ſhewing a contented Spirit, in receding from their Rights and their Opinions to buy peace: It is in theſe, that good men may approve their Moderation. *Submit your ſelves one to another, and be clothed with Humility.* This ſubmitting our ſelves to our Equals, where no Law requires it, is indeed one part of Moderation: But then no doubt, the other is, Submiſſion to our Superiors. The making our own Intereſt and our own Paſſions ſtoop to the Laws of thoſe Higher Powers under which we live; the appearing in defence of their Rights and their Perſons, and eſpouſing their Quarrels with more Zeal than our own. This ſhews that a Man is concern'd for his Duty more than for his own Will: And this gives a much better account of the vertue of Moderation, than the being but coldly affected towards our Governors, and the being partial and defective in our Obedience to their Laws.

He certainly is the great Peace-maker, who by his Example and Perſuaſion, and Power and Intereſt in the World, brings others as much as he can to the known and ſtanding terms of Publick peace; That is, to comply with the Laws. A good Man that hath Prudence

Prudence and Temper may compoſe ſome little Differences in the Neighbourhood, and 'tis very well ſo to do: But he prevents greater Miſchiefs, and is a more publick Benefactor that endeavours to Unite a Nation, by bringing them to make the Laws, the Rule of their Actions.

In order to make things even, and fit to be joyned, 'tis not to bend the Rule according to the Obliquity of each one, that would leave them as they are, as crooked and as unfit for Union: But 'tis the bending the things themſelves, and bringing them to the ſtreightneſs of the Rule. So the Laws which are the publick meaſure of Actions, muſt not be made to yield to every one, whoſe Will or Opinion makes him diſſent from them; that would make no Agreement nor no Settlement; that would leave all things looſe and uncertain, as contrary to each other, as mens Tempers or Notions are. Whereas making Men yield themſelves, and fit their Actions to the preſcript Rule, and ſo far deny their own Will as to order their outward deportment by the publick Standard: That makes Uniformity and Order, in things material and of publick Intereſt; and in others, Men muſt govern themſelves by Diſcretion and Charity.

A due regard indeed is to be had to our Brothers, to be tender and Compaſſionate towards them, to give them, and to forgive them of our own: But that muſt not abate of our Obedience where it is due; we muſt not rob our Rulers to give our Fellow-Subjects.

Suppoſe we for Example, that a Family be ſo divided, as that ſome of the Children riſe up againſt the Parents, and whilſt they make them Contemptible, and raiſe loud Clamours againſt them, ſeek, as is uſual,

to propagate their Diſcontents, and to ingratiate themſelves with the reſt of the Family, by pleading the common Liberties of all. What ſhall they do now, that are not engag'd in this undutiful Quarrel? The reſt of the Brothers that are willing to be ſubject to Paternal power, muſt they excuſe or favour this Mutiny? or remain indifferent out of Moderation and Brotherly Kindneſs? No, doubtleſs. In other Caſes they might be neuter, or offer to arbitrate the Diſpute: But here, God and Nature have engag'd them on their Parents ſide; they are to maintain their power, and by all lawful means, to reduce their undutiful Brothers to the ſame Obedience. They are freely to blame their proceedings, and to ſhew them the iniquity of the miſchief of them.

What uſage muſt we expect from our Fellow-Servants, ſhould they ſhake off the yoke and become Maſters, when we ſee them contend againſt their Governors, and refuſe to yield where their Duty requires it? If they have ſo much of Pride, or ſtubborn ill Nature, as not to bend their Will, and ſubmit their Humour to that Authority God hath plac'd over them, they muſt be lookt upon as common Enemies, and the Diſturbers of the Peace. Undutiful Children muſt be plainly told ſo, even by their Brothers, be they never ſo kind, where ſuch Contentions do ariſe.

And this is a more likely means to make up the breach of a Family, than to hold in ſome things with one, and in ſome things with the other, and ſo perpetuate the Quarrel, out of tenderneſs not to diſoblige either ſide. Union can only be had by the Concentring of many different Wills into ſubjection to one, whom God hath ſet above the reſt. Then if the Children fall out among themſelves, the Father decides the

the matter: But if any of them fall out with him, who ſhall judg betwixt them? Nothing remains but Confuſion, where the means and bonds of Order are rejected.

And ſo clearly he is the peaceable Man, and the true Peace-maker, not that holds in ſome things for Obedience, and in ſome thing for the Diſobedient: But he that Conforms himſelf to the Laws, and aſſerts their Authority; ſubdues his own Spirit to the Determinations of his Governors, and doth what he can, bring others to the ſame Submiſſion; that there may be one common Rule for all, which is that which we call Order and Unity.

But then Thirdly, What ſhall they do that cannot comply with ſome Laws, not becauſe their Will or their Intereſt is againſt them, but becauſe their Perſuaſions are not ſatisfied, and they have Objections and Scruples unremoved? Muſt they act againſt their Conſcience, and Obey where they firmly believe they ought not to do it? No, by no means. They muſt ſuffer meekly what the Sanction inflicts.

This is my laſt Propoſition, and a thing abſolutely requiſite in order to publick Peace. That where the Laws enjoyn what is Sinful, there a good Man without breaking or endangering the common Tranquillity, muſt Submit himſelf to the Puniſhment.

Bleſſed be God, this is far from our Caſe. The very ſtating ſuch Suppoſitions, implies ſomething of Ingratitude againſt God, and the juſt and eaſie Government of our Gracious Sovereign: But I ſpeak it only to prevent the Objection of ſuch of our Fellow-Subjects as complain and are uneaſie, and would inſinuate that this is our Caſe.

I ſay then, If it be clear and evident to a Man, that the Declarations of Humane Authority are againſt ſome plain and expreſs Commandment of God, there he muſt chuſe God's Will rather than Man's: And yet ſubmit to that Power God hath Ordained over him. The ſame Conſcience, the ſame Duty to God, requires his patient Subjection, and that he ſhould never reſiſt: as that he ſhould tranſgreſs an impious humane Injunction: As *Daniel* did; and the Apoſtles; and all they that have endured Perſecution for Righteouſneſs. That is, he muſt Suffer for Well-doing; and thus ſtill remain dutiful to God and to his Prince.

Dan. 6. 10.
Acts 4. 18.

This is not in the caſe of Doubts, much leſs of Ignorance, where Men ſometimes entertain Averſions and Diſlikes, and know not for why. Nor yet in the caſe of Wiſdom or Expediency, where a Man might cenſure the publick Conſtitutions as inconvenient, and fancy he could appoint better. Though many upon theſe accounts are forward enough to be Factious and Clamorous, yet few will be willing to Suffer peaceably. It muſt be where we cannot obey Humane Laws without diſobedience to God: Then for Conſcience towards God, to endure Grief ſuffering wrongfully, this is a good proof that a Man is truly perſuaded he cannot Conform without Sin; This is highly acceptable to God, and he will reward it. And however, this Patience and Reſignation of him that Suffers, preſerves the peace of the Community: and no doubt, doth alſo preſerve the peace of his own Mind.

The Conditions of Peace and War, are the higheſt Prerogatives of Kings and Supreme Magiſtrates.

ſtrates. They may appoint the common Terms of Union and Agreement for a whole Nation, and by what Rules Men ſhall Govern themſelves: But a private Perſon judgeth for none but for himſelf only. So that when he Diſſents from the Laws Eſtabliſh'd, he may not by Noiſe and Complaints make Parties againſt them, nor excite Diſcontents, nor Reſiſtance againſt thoſe Higher Powers that have Impos'd them. That would be to make his private Judgment ſuperior to that of publick Authority. That would put it in the power of every one that pretends Conſcience for not Obeying, to null Laws, and to be very troubleſome.

A Man muſt take great care that his Conſcience be well inform'd, and always guided by God's Will: And then in following of it, when it leads him againſt publick Decrees, he muſt do it with ſo much Humility, and ſo much Meekneſs, that it may plainly appear it is upon God's account, he diſobeys and Suffers patiently; he muſt Conform and Comply, as far as ever he can, without ſinning againſt God; and he muſt be paſſive where he may not proceed further. For ſtill he is but a Subject, who muſt be over-rul'd by the Will of his Superiors; ſtill the Government remains in full Force, and he is bound to preſerve Peace, and therefore paſſively to Submit himſelf to the Laws, which are the known and fixt Meaſures and Conditions of it.

Saint *Paul* here and elſewhere, recommending peace with all Men, intended not to bind Chriſtians to obſerve all the Laws of the *Roman* Empire, of which ſome were againſt Chriſtianity, and others for Idolatry: He rather oblig'd them to meek and patient

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Subjection, to undergo the Inflictions of those evil Laws, without disturbance to the Commonwealth. That they should not be provoked to any Rebellion or Undutifulness against their Governors, by their grievous Sufferings: but still for Conscience sake, to bear what Laws and Providence had impos'd upon them; and still to be faithful and peaceable Subjects.

There are no other Terms of peace with Magistrates, but either to obey the Laws, or to undergo the penalty of their Transgression: So that where their duty to God kept them from Active Obedience, there the Apostle would have them so to dissent from their Rulers, as not to trouble the Order and the Tranquillity of the place where they Liv'd. That is, as he tells them plainly in the following Chapter, absolutely to be Subject, and never to Resist, under the pain of Damnation. That they might be acquitted from any Stubbornness, or Pride, or Rebellious Principles, by their free Obedience in all that was lawful; and their humble patience under all sinful Injunctions. By this 'twas to be manifest, that they were disposed to render every Man his due; to give *Cesar* the things that were *Cesar's*; to be Friends to all Men, and to live peaceably with them, as long as it engaged them in no Rebellion against God.

Rom. 13.

Answerable to this, was ever the Behaviour of Primitive Christians, under those tedious and cruel Persecutions they endur'd for Three Hundred Years. And had the Temper and Principles of such as pretend to be the best of Christians, in these latter Times, been the same; we should have had more peace. And those Excellent Laws under which we Live,

Live, and which oblige us, to Fear and Worſhip God, and to Honour the King, and to be Juſt and Charitable to all Men; theſe would have been better obey'd.

I wonder for my part, how they can ſo delude the People, as to get the names of Godly, and good Patriots, who under ſuch an equitable and gracious Government as is here Eſtabliſh'd, yet are Diſcontented, and Reſtleſs, and Clamorous, and always diſſatisfied with publick Conſtitutions: And very buſie, ſometimes very fierce againſt thoſe Laws which keep us in peace, and make us very happy, if we knew our own Happineſs. When beſides our preſent Intereſt, our whole Religion, the very Spirit of Chriſtianity is ſo directly contrary to all Murmuring, and Faction, and Unpeaceableneſs, 'tis very ſtrange they ſhould take ſuch good Names, that do things ſo ill, and ſo very miſchievous.

But no more can be done from this place, than to ſhew People their Duty. That the Laws are the Meaſure of our publick Peace, and the Foundation of it. That they are moſt peaceable who make thoſe Laws, in things lawful, the Rules of their Actions; and who by their Power and their Intereſt in the World, maintain their juſt Authority. And that if a good Man ſhould live under ſuch wicked Laws, as ſhould be contrary to his Chriſtian Duty, there he muſt be patient, and ſuffer for his Allegiance to God: expecting a reward from him that hath bound him to be Subject: ſtill preſerving the Reverence and Submiſſion due to his Governors; and ſhewing himſelf deſirous of peace, and ready to embrace it upon any terms that are not an offence againſt God.

In theſe a Man muſt ſhew his peaceable Diſpoſition, if he be really a profeſſor of the Goſpel of Peace: As alſo in receding from his Right in leſſer matters; in making allowance for Humane Infirmities, in being Gentle and Charitable, as well as Juſt to every Man.

Theſe are apt to win Men, and to prevent or compoſe Contentions: Or however, publick Peace, which may be called Peace with all Men, is ſecured by yielding to Authority, and being ſubject to thoſe Laws, which are the common Bonds and ſtanding Conditions of peace.

As certainly, Chriſtians, as that we muſt one day give an account for what we do here upon Earth, it will be one of the great Enquiries, when we ſhall all appear before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, and there receive according to our Works, whether or no we preſerved that Order and Subordination which God appointed amongſt Men; whether we mov'd in our own Spheres, and minded the proper Duties of our ſeveral places: And ſad will be their Doom that were here Contentious, and caus'd Murmurings and Confuſions in the World.

There all ſuch workers of Iniquity, who by their power or Hypocriſie eſcaped here the hands of Juſtice, ſhall meet with a ſevere Vengeance; and have their portion for ever, with thoſe proud and rebellious Spirits who would not be content with that ſtation, wherein God had plac'd them. None but Meek and Juſt, Loyal and Peaceable Men, ſhall be numbred among the Saints of God, and enjoy for ever that Reſt he hath prepared for his People.

We are all going to the Grave, where we muſt be quiet. After all the Buſtle and Hurry, and Clamours

murs and Contentions of this World, we must dwell in Silence, and one by one go to receive that Irreverſible Sentence, upon which depends an eternity of Bliſs or Miſery. Let us then becalm our Paſſions, and compoſe our Spirits; and by Lowlineſs and Humility, and Obedience to God, and Subjection to thoſe that Reign by him, ſecure a laſting peace to our Immortal Souls.

Fear and Terrors ſeize upon evil Minds; *There is is no peace to the Wicked.* They that diſturb the World, and are miſchievous to Mankind, are themſelves like the troubled Sea when it cannot reſt, they live in a perpetual Storm. *Where Envying and Strife is, there is Confuſion, and every evil Work.* But bleſſed be the Peace-makers, for they are the Children of God; Peace and Felicity ſhall be their portion for ever.

There is no need I ſhould Tire you further, with laying before you the many Obligations which Nature, and Reaſon, and Religion, have laid upon us, thus to endeavour after Peace: And how much our proſperity in this World, and our happineſs in the next, are concern'd in this our Duty. We cannot look into our Conſciences, nor into our Bibles, but we find declarations of this. We all know it to be true; I pray God we may find it ſeriouſly, and practiſe accordingly. That he that came to teach us to deny our ſelves, to mortifie our Pride, and our ſtubborn Humours, and ſo make a Reconciliation betwixt God and us, and Unite us together; that he may now ſo guide our Feet into the ways of Peace, that we may here enjoy that bleſſed

Legacy he left his Servants; as an earneſt of that Eternal peace which makes the Bliſs of Saints above, and the earneſt deſire and endeavour of good Men here below. *Amen, Peace upon Earth, Glory to God on High.*

FINIS.